

McKibbin Brothers sidewalk stamps

The McKibbins were brothers: Edwin and Arthur. Edwin can be seen in this 1883 picture of him and his wife Alice camping out in the snow not long after their arrival in Calgary (Edwin's on the ladder in the background).



The U of C/ Glenbow also has this undated portrait of Arthur.

The oldest surviving example of a McKibbin contractor stamp dates to 1909, with 1913 being the most common. Today, they can still be spotted in Inglewood, Bridgeland, Crescent Heights and Hillhurst. When the city awarded contracts for various construction projects in the early years, the tenderers were often publicly discussed in newspaper articles. On the following page, we've included a few examples.



ALDERMEN HAVE LIVELY MEETING

LONG DISCUSSION OVER AWARD-
ING OF CONTRACT FOR
SIDEWALKS.

Eventually Decided to Divide Up Work
Between Farenbach and McKibbin
Bros.—Exhibition Board There to See
How Council Feels About Increased
Grant—Report Of the Railway Com-
mittee Accepted.

Last night's meeting of the council developed into a very strenuous evening, as there was a lot of business to be dealt with, including three commissioner's reports, which aroused some discussion. The item in the reports presented by Mayor Mitchell and Commissioners Graves and Clarke which caused possibly the most interest of the evening was the clause on publicity, and that is shelved, though there is hope of its rejuvenation, but after the letter and speech of the city solicitor, there was nothing remaining but its withdrawal.

The recommendation that the sidewalk contract be given to E. Farenbach was the item that elicited the most animated discussion. The tender which the report advised the council to ratify was a small amount lower than that of competitors. No sooner had it been read than inquiries were asked as to why the contract had not been divided up, as in previous years. McKibbin Bros. had many friends around the board who thought that their tender should have had some consideration.

Lowest Prices.

It was pointed out that as the walks were put in by local improvement as a direct tax on the property affected, that it was desirable that the lowest possible price should be accepted. But the McKibbinites were strong, and it was finally passed that the commissioners should divide the work between these two contractors. Some comment had been made upon the recommendation of other tenders which were not the lowest and Mayor Mitchell said that when he and the commissioners recommended the acceptance of a tender, there was always some good reason for it. A half-hearted attempt was made to have the work done at the same price as the Farenbach tender, but this was not acted upon.

NEW SIDEWALKS

Commissioners Decide on Tenders For
Much Work in the City.

The sidewalks to be put in this year under the new bylaws will be laid by E. Farenbach, whose tender was the lowest of those received by the commissioners. The price for curb and gutter will be 46 cents per lineal foot, and for the sidewalk without filling 9½c; and without filling 5c per square foot. The total of Mr. Farenbach's tender is 57½c and 56c. His price was considerably less than the others received.

Following are the tenders received:

Davidson and Westaway—Curb and gutter, 58c; sidewalks with filling, 13c; total, 71½c.

Calgary Construction Co.—Curb and gutter, 50c; sidewalks with filling, 10c; total, 60c.

Dan McGrath—Curb and gutter, 59c.

Forest City Paving Co.—Curb and gutter, 56c; Sidewalks with filling, 9 7-10c; sidewalks without filling, 8½c; total, 65 7-10c.

Crown Paving Co.—Curb and gutter, 52c; sidewalks with filling, 10¼c; sidewalks without filling, 8¾c; total, 62¾c.

F. Farenbach—Curb and gutter, 48c; sidewalks with filling, 9½c; sidewalks without filling, 8c; total, 58½c.

Calgary Paving Co.—Curb and gutter, 65c.

McKibbin Bros.—Sidewalks with filling, 10½c; sidewalks without filling, 8½c.

McKibbin Bros.—Sidewalks with filling, 11½c; sidewalks without filling, 9½c.

A wee postscript to the story of the McKibbins. A few years ago, we were contacted by some of their descendants, who expressed a wish for a sidewalk section with their forebears' stamp. We contacted the City Roads Department, who were replacing sidewalks in Bridgeland, and they kindly assisted us in our quest. The section removed now reposes at the family campground a few hours north of Calgary, but the photo below shows the slab in our garage, prior to pick-up by the family.



And finally, a small piece of trivia. One of the McKibbin descendants is a well-known local television newsperson, but we're not saying who!